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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0913**

December 9, 2020

The Honorable Ron DeSantis, Governor  
State of Florida  
The Capitol  
400 S. Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor DeSantis,

I trust you share my outrage over article that appears in the December 6, 2020 print edition of *Tampa Bay Times* entitled "Death at Freedom Square" that details how horrific mismanagement contributed to sickness and death of residents and staff at a retirement complex in Seminole, Florida in my district. The article details outrageous abuses that must be investigated and prosecuted if confirmed to be true.

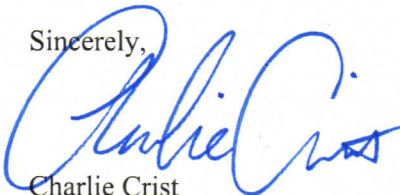
Additionally, I request that you consider ordering a separate investigation into the clearly inadequate regulation and oversight of Florida's long-term care facilities that once again led to the senseless and – I would argue – preventable deaths of Floridians who live or recover in our long-term care facilities. To wit, this shocking investigative journalism follows two letters I sent to state leaders over the summer attempting to ring the alarm about unsafe conditions and inadequate regulation. In a June 8<sup>th</sup> letter to you, I requested a detailed COVID-19 testing plan for long-term care facilities and even cited Freedom Square's unacceptably high death toll. In an August 12<sup>th</sup> letter to Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration, I led nine other members of Florida's Congressional Delegation flagging insufficient personal protective equipment for long-term care facility staff that was putting them and the residents under their care at risk. I deeply regret that these warnings appeared to have gone unheeded.

Dr. Deborah Birx, Coronavirus Response Coordinator for the White House Coronavirus Task Force, recently called the looming winter surge, "the worst event that this country will face." With pandemic warning lights flashing red, we must be prepared to protect the most vulnerable – namely, residents of Florida's long-term care facilities. I stand ready to support your efforts to take the following actions:

1. Launch a full-scale investigation of the tragedy at Freedom Square,
2. Prosecute any wrongdoing that led to sickness and death of residents and staff at Freedom Square, and
3. Take an honest look at why Florida cannot seem to get long-term care regulation and oversight right.

This is too important to ignore.

Sincerely,



Charlie Crist  
UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN